

threatening recession for our whole area.

It became clear in those hearings that this crisis was not brought about by any problem with the supply and demand, as some people charged, but was pure manipulation of the market by a few profit hungry power merchants who provide and generate the electricity for the western market.

Three hundred fifty million dollars was sucked out of the San Diego economy in the last 3 months, \$2 billion out of the California economy.

I have legislation, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that the victims of this incredible price gouging disaster are not the consumers and small business people of California but those who have made the ill-gotten gains.

Please pass H.R. 5131 to help San Diego.

DR. OSCAR ELIAS BISCET, CUBAN DISSIDENT

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet, a Cuban dissident who, after more than 6 months of imprisonment in Castro's jail, clings to life in the hope that his situation will help galvanize the global community in support of Cuba's political prisoner and dissident movement.

Dr. Biscet, an Amnesty International prisoner of conscience, has suffered 46 days of torture for refusing to succumb to his oppressors. He has been denied medical attention and has even been denied a Bible and religious visits.

The doctor interpreted his duty under the Hippocratic Oath as an obligation to defend the lives of the Cuban people.

Dr. Biscet could not ignore the cries of anguish of all who have died at the hands of the Castro regime. His commitment is clearly stated in a letter that he gave to his wife during their last visit:

"The evil one, Castro, must acknowledge in me an eternal rival who will not lower his sword of justice, even if confronted by misery, pain, and death simultaneously."

The U.S. and the Congress have always stood for freedom and for the defense of the oppressed the world over.

I ask my colleagues to join me in calling for Dr. Biscet's immediate release so that he can continue his mission to try to free the Cuban people.

AN IMPERFECT MILITARY

(Mr. HEFLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, the Cold War may be over but the weight of responsibility inherited by the United

States is heavier than ever. Threats are no longer contained by bipolar ideologies. Threats come from every corner of the world. It is under these conditions where our military forces find themselves doing more with less.

Stretched to a point where spare parts become an oxymoron and retention and morale is critical, it is in this environment where I fail to understand the President's rationale in sending Congress defense budgets asking for fewer and fewer dollars.

In every budget year since Clinton and GORE took office, the administration has proposed a decrease in defense spending. As a matter of fact, the defense budget has been reduced by more than \$10 billion in constant dollars since fiscal year 1993.

Fortunately, the Armed Forces have received better support from a Republican controlled Congress. Despite cuts proposed by the administration, Congress has funded above the President's request and has long recognized the importance of a prepared and well-funded military force.

Mr. Speaker, we should be proud of our men and women in uniform and should provide them what they need to do the job.

CONGRESSIONAL BASKETBALL TEAM DEFEATS AMERICAN LEAGUE OF LOBBYISTS

(Mr. QUINN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. QUINN. Mr. Speaker, I am here to announce that for the second year in a row now, the Congressional basketball team has defeated the team of lobbyists from the American League of Lobbyists here in Washington, D.C. Last night's game was a hard-earned victory of 70-67.

The Congressional team got together in a bipartisan way. I would like to mention that the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. BARRETT); the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LOBIONDO); the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. HULSHOF); the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY), our general manager and commissioner; the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER); the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), our MVP last night; the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND); the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE); the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA); the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS); and the gentleman from California (Mr. BACA) all got together in an effort to prove that we can get along here in Washington and that we can do better when the cause is right.

Last night the American League of Lobbyists organized a benefit for over \$17,000 that will go to charity for the Hill staffers, for the hungry and homeless, for Horton's kids, and for Everybody Wins, a youth mentoring program here in the Washington, D.C. area.

We set a challenge for the lobbyists we can get along better, and we are going to make sure that some young people here in Washington, D.C., benefit from it.

CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, we are all aware of the impact that cancer has on the American public. Sadly, we often do not realize the severity of childhood cancer. Today alone, 46 children will be diagnosed with cancer. But even more disturbing is that only two-thirds of those with cancer will survive.

Childhood cancer was recently brought to my attention when Kimberly Davies, the daughter of a member of my Washington staff, was diagnosed with CML leukemia at the age of 7.

Kimberly is doing well and continues to fight this dreaded disease. Kimberly is lucky, she has a bone marrow match through her sisters. However, most children are forced to wait and look nationally for bone marrow donors. This process can be extremely long and terribly uncertain.

The prognosis for Kimberly is positive. However, without the constant research and new methods of treatment, Kimberly's outlook may not have been so good.

Cancer is not a disease which only affects adults. Cancer affects children, too. It is important that Americans are aware of this and work to prevent and cure all forms of cancer. In Congress, it is important that we continue to fund children's cancer research. Every day, science inches closer to finding a cure. Let us not hold back now.

I urge my colleagues to support the funding of child cancer research this year and in the years to come.

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CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, last week, many parents throughout our districts sent their wide-eyed, youthful, energetic and anxious children off to their first day of school. What is disturbing to every one of us who may be a parent is that on any given school day, 46 children are diagnosed with cancer and two out of three will not survive.

September is Childhood Cancer Month, placing the spotlight on pediatric cancer, the number one disease killer of our children.

While these statistics may be depressing, the research and innovation

into providing early diagnoses and finding a cure proved to be very hopeful for many of us parents.

Mr. Speaker, Congress must remain committed to funding cancer research programs, especially for pediatric cancer. As we participate in the Childhood Cancer Gold Ribbon Day, let us remember the youthful victims of cancer.

Congress must fully fund pediatric cancer research to ensure that they become youthful survivors instead of youthful victims.

IN MEMORY OF CARLOS CACERES COLLAZO, U.S. CITIZEN KILLED IN EAST TIMOR VIOLENCE

(Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Speaker, the news last week of the brutal murder of the three United Nations workers in West Timor, Indonesia at the hands of an angry mob has faded to the back pages of the country's daily newspapers.

But for the family the only U.S. citizen killed in that attack, Carlos Caceres Collazo, a native of San Juan, Puerto Rico, the agony of the tragedy is still sinking in.

Carlos Caceres Collazo joined the United Nations High Commission on Refugees in 1995 and chose to work in the dangerous field of providing humanitarian aid to refugees in troubled spots such as East Timor.

The tragic death of this bright man, a graduate of Cornell University Law School and the University of Florida, underscores the frailty of human life, but it also highlights the strength and valor of answering the call to those who serve those in need.

Mr. Speaker, I never met Carlos Caceres, but it comes as no surprise to me to learn that he, like so many Puerto Ricans before him, gave his life to defend the rights of others continuing a tradition of public service.

TOP ISSUE FOR REPUBLICANS IS EDUCATION

(Mr. EHLERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, last evening we had a chance, once again, to demonstrate that one of the top issues, if not the top issue, of the Republicans is education. We were in this Chamber debating an excellent bill proposed by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Chairman GOODLING) of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

He served for many years as a teacher, then principal, then superintendent; and he has put his knowledge to good use in his work here as chairman of the

Committee on Education and the Workforce.

This bill will improve reading training of children, but above all, through a stroke of genius, he has also included provisions that parents will receive training in reading if they are illiterate.

Mr. Speaker, in my years of education, I discovered that the single greatest factor in the success of the student is an interested and involved parent. But if the parent cannot read, how do we expect the child to learn how to read?

The bill of the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) will ensure that both will happen, and it also builds into it accountability to make certain that the government's money is not wasted. This bill does much more than just that, but I wanted to highlight this issue. I encourage all of my colleagues to vote yes on this excellent piece of education legislation.

IMPROVEMENTS IN MILITARY RETIREE HEALTHCARE

(Ms. GRANGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of improvements in military retiree healthcare. While we can never adequately thank the millions of men and women who have proudly worn the uniform in defense of America, we must honor our commitments to them.

Several provisions of the fiscal year 2001 Defense authorization bill, which is currently in conference committee, are important steps in honoring that commitment.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see that both Chambers passed proposals to provide a prescription drug benefit to Medicare eligible military retirees. Currently, military provided health benefits for beneficiaries over 65, fall far short of what larger employers, including the Federal Government, provide to their retired civilians.

Including a drug benefit for military retirees is a necessary step in keeping our promises to the men and women who risk their lives for our freedom. As I like to say, every day when I get up, I thank God for my life and I thank our Armed Forces for my way of life.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the conference committee to include these common sense proposals in the Defense authorization bill, and in doing so, we will honor the heroes who protected freedom in America and ensured democracy for the world.

MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

(Mr. WELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, there is a fundamental question this House of Representatives has worked so hard to address, and that is, is it right, is it fair that under our Tax Code 25 million married working couples on average pay \$1,400 more in higher taxes.

Let me give an example of a couple back in Joliet, Illinois, Shad and Michelle Hallihan. They have a combined income of about \$65,000. They are public school teachers. They own a home. They have a little baby, Ben, a child.

They suffer the marriage tax penalty. In fact, their marriage tax penalty making \$65,000 a year is about \$1,400. Every House Republican, 51 Democrats joined with us, we voted to eliminate the marriage tax penalty. Unfortunately, Bill Clinton and AL GORE vetoed our effort to wipe out the marriage tax penalty for people like Shad and Michelle Hallihan. AL GORE says that people like Shad and Michelle who make \$65,000 a year, own a home, have a child, suffer a marriage tax penalty of \$1,400 a year are rich and should not be helped. That is wrong.

My hope is today, as we vote to attempt to override Bill Clinton's and AL GORE's veto, that our effort to eliminate the marriage tax penalty and that more Democrats will join with us on this fundamental issue of fairness.

We will work to help people like Shad and Michelle Hallihan, two public school teachers who pay higher taxes just because they are married.

URGING COLLEAGUES TO OVERRIDE VETO OF MARRIAGE PENALTY RELIEF

(Mr. KNOLLENBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleague from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) in rising to urge my colleagues to override the President's recent veto of marriage penalty relief. The Marriage Penalty Relief Act passed by significant margins in both the House and the Senate. It is overdue for tax relief to our middle-income families, who are dependent on two-wage earners, who are hardest hit by this penalty. It is especially hard on that second wage, often the wife's salary, because their income is taxed at higher marginal rates, often from 15 percent to 28 percent. You can see how tough it is.

As the President makes up his long list of end-of-the-year spending priorities, let him remember and let us remember the 25 million married couples who are struggling to make ends meet. Instead of dedicating the surplus to more spending ideas and bigger government plans, we should return some of it to the American people who earned it, while continuing to pay down the debt.